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*Admitted only in Maryland
*Admitted only in Virginia
*Practice Limited to
Federal Agencies

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Commissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
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Art Unit 1641

Re: U.S. Utility Patent Application
Application No. 09/889,520; Filed: December 10, 2001
For: **Assay With Reduced Background**
Inventors: RAVEN *et al.*
Our Ref: 1581.0810000/RWE

Sir:

Transmitted herewith for appropriate action are the following documents:

1. Amendment and Reply Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111; and
2. Return postcard.

It is respectfully requested that the attached postcard be stamped with the date of filing of these documents, and that it be returned to our courier. In the event that extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this patent application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned.

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is hereby authorized to charge any fee deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-0036.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.

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RWE/M-M:amr
260832.1

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE



In re application of:

RAVEN *et al.*

Appl. No.: 09/889,520

Filed: December 10, 2001

For: **Assay With Reduced Background**

Confirmation No.: 4276

Art Unit: 1641

Examiner: Davis, Deborah A.

Atty. Docket: 1581.0810000/RWE/M-M

Amendment and Reply Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111

Commissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In reply to the Office Action dated February 9, 2004, (PTO Prosecution File Wrapper Paper No. 17); Applicants submit the following Amendment and Remarks.

This Amendment is provided in the following format:

- (A) Each section begins on a separate sheet;
- (B) Starting on a separate sheet, a complete listing of all of the claims:
 - in ascending order;
 - with status identifiers; and
 - with markings in the currently amended claims;
- (D) Starting on a separate sheet, the Remarks.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, if additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and any fees required therefor (including fees for net addition of claims) are hereby authorized to be charged to our Deposit Account No. 19-0036.